

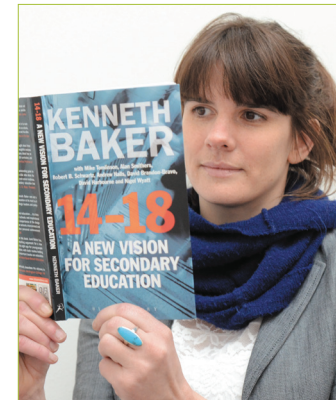
Indian market attracts colleges



From left: Sue Rimmer, South Thames College, Andy Wilson, Westminster Kingsway College, Dawn Ward, Burton and South Derbyshire College, Matthew Hancock, Skills Minister, Asha Khemka, West Nottinghamshire College, Stella-Ngozi Mbubaegbu, Highbury College, Sunaina Mann, Nescot and Richard Atkins, Exeter College - See pages 8 & 9

Monday, January 28, 2013
www.feweek.co.uk

Baker says new vision kneaded



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Beatrix Groves interview



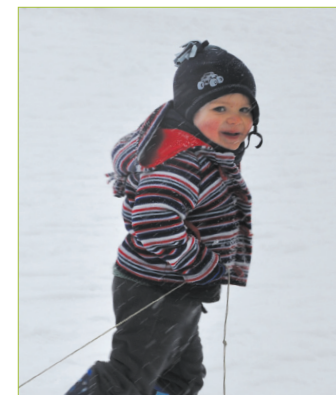
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Campus Round-up



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Chilly mascot



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Government acts on 'conflict of interest'

Chris Henwood
@Chris_Henwood

The government has set up a Skills Funding Agency-led review to look into the issue of potential conflicts of interest where awarding organisations also deliver education, *FE Week* can reveal.

Ofqual, the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) are also on board in a task and finish group set up to look at joint ownership.

It was set up following a BIS Select Committee report on apprenticeships in November that said the government should look "critically upon this serious issue [joint ownership]."

"We accept that the practice of joint ownership is not unusual but learner experience is key and should not be put in jeopardy by conflicts of interest," said the committee report.

Ofqual was already investigating the issue and a spokesperson said last year it would be "saying more about our thinking in due course".

However, the government's response to the report said the agency

would also be investigating.

"A task and finish group is being convened which is being led by the SFA and will include Ofqual, NAS and BIS," said the government response, issued on Friday, January 25.

"The work will start with a review of those awarding organisations, predominantly, where there are instances of vertical integration with a training arm in order to understand what protocols and, if necessary, sanctions can be put in place to ensure provision and the brand is not compromised."

The 11-month select committee review of apprenticeships recommended a host of changes, including "closer scrutiny, careful monitoring or even complete reform".

It called for an "overarching government strategy and clear purpose for the apprenticeship programme," along with a "formal" definition of apprenticeship.

It recommended a simplified funding system and a review of profit levels among training providers.

"The apprenticeship programme needs clarity, oversight and, in these straightened times, to demonstrate that it is providing value for money,"

said committee chairman Adrian Bailey MP.

"There are many areas that require closer scrutiny, careful monitoring or even complete reform."

The government said it agreed with many of the committee's recommendations and had taken action, including asking entrepreneur and former Dragons' Den investor Doug Richard to look into apprenticeships.

His findings, published in November, would be looked at, said a government spokesperson, and a consultation on implementing his recommendations would launch in the spring.

The spokesperson further said government strategy on apprenticeships was clarified in the 2010 Skills Strategy — Skills for Sustainable Growth and 2011 New Challenges New Chances.

"With a small number of specific exceptions, all apprentices must be employed, and working towards the completion of a recognised apprenticeship framework," they said.

The apprenticeship system had also been made clearer, they added, with an apprenticeships website (www.apprenticeships.org.uk).

"The system helps individuals to understand apprenticeships better and search through vacancies," said the spokesperson.

"It also enables employers and learning providers to advertise vacancies to a wide range of applicants."

They added: "The agency and NAS monitors all aspects of the take-up and quality of apprenticeships and will continue to take action to ensure the apprenticeships offer meets the needs of employers and learners."

Meanwhile, the committee's call for government to take a more "active approach" to reviewing profit levels among providers elicited a positive response.

"The agency collects the annual financial statement of training providers as part of its risk management processes," said the government spokesperson.

"Training providers may derive their income from different sources, however, where those financial statements imply that profits derive from agency programmes are unusually high, the agency will review delivery with the training provider to establish whether there is any risk to the efficient use of funding."

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FE Week is the only newspaper dedicated to news, analysis, jobs and fun in the FE sector.

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Top careers advice tweets:

- 

@SportsCharlie
53% of employers believe young people receive inadequate careers advice: Connecting with companies for work exp helps
- 

@Mikeh_UK
How can #teachers give #careers advice? Their career path was #school to school to Uni to school!
- 

@alexcliff0rd
‘I did that computer test at school and I’m sure one of the suitable careers it threw up was mortician’
- 

@grahamelliott81
It sounds as if UK careers advice is going down the plughole with government cuts. It was lousy when I left school
- 

@RealVivSkills
Good to see school careers advice in the news - wish it was about positive development initiatives and not the blame game

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Union blasts FE loans

Eleanor Radford

@EleanorRadford

The NUS has branded FE loans a “dangerous policy” and raised a number of questions over the new system ahead of its introduction in August.

Its vice president and spokesperson on FE, Toni Pearce, said the new funding system could hit learner numbers.

Ahead of an anti-loans day next month in which the NUS is urging people to write to their MPs on the issue, she warned of a “major impact on apprenticeship uptake,” unease over FE loans among mature students and claimed the new system could affect Muslim learners.

“We think this is a dangerous policy and will have a major impact on apprenticeship uptake,” said Ms Pearce.

“We feel in this instance it is apprentices who are going to get the worst deal as those apprentices over 24 years will be taking out a loan of up to several thousand pounds to effectively work.”

She added: “We are hearing mature students don’t want to take out loans — these are huge amounts of money.

“If I was in their shoes I would be really concerned about the financial implications — it will really difficult for mature students to access further education.”

She said there was no option to take out a loan under Sharia Law, creating a “huge problem of social integration by limiting the number of Muslims getting into further and higher education”.

However, a spokesperson for the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) defended the new loans system saying market research showed their “terms and

conditions ... are positively received”.

The government currently pays 50 per cent of tuition fees for most further education students aged 25 and over who want to study at level 3 (or above) but from this year anyone aged 24 or over will no longer be entitled to this financial contribution.

They will have to pay the full cost – with learners becoming eligible for a loan for 100 per cent of the tuition.

Shadow FE Minister Gordon Marsden has been critical of the fact new system has not been advertised nationally. And, echoing his concerns, Ms Pearce said colleges were in the dark about loans.

“It’s really dangerous to go so blindly into something now without anyone knowing about it,” she said.

The NUS’s anti loans event next month is called the FE Fees Constituency Lobby Day. It takes place on February 8.

“We were successful last year in getting the government to write-off FE loans for people who then go on to study in higher education,” added Ms Pearce.

“The government also pledged an extra £50m to student financial support adults in further education so we are now asking people to again lobby their local constituency politician. This is all part of the same campaign,” said Ms Pearce.

A BIS spokesperson said: “Students, including apprentices will not be expected to pay anything up front for their course and will only repay their loan once they have completed the course and are earning above £21,000. Market research shows that the terms and conditions of 24+ Advanced Learning Loans are positively received. It also shows that the quality of the course and the future benefits to the individual are the most important factors when deciding to invest in training.”

Contract suspended after ‘missing data’

Chris Henwood

@Chris_Henwood

A troubled provider’s £4.5m contract with the Skills Funding Agency has been suspended after “errors and missing data” were uncovered in its learner paperwork.

Mymar Training Limited, which has indicated plans to close having failed to “secure sufficient funds for the future,” gave the agency incomplete and incorrect funding claims.

The agency said the problem could amount to a breach of contract and warned the firm, based in Plymouth, that it could be asked to pay back taxpayers’ money.

Mymar’s problems come less than a month after sister firm Walwyn Trust went into administration.

A joint statement from the agency and National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) said: “We have worked extensively with Mymar Training Limited to try to develop a quality apprenticeship programme that meets our statutory standards and offers a good experience for apprentices.

“The agency has been informed by Mymar that it was unable to secure sufficient funds for the future and therefore has announced its

planned closure.

“The agency has been in discussion with Mymar as sufficient evidence to support errors and missing data in their funding claims hadn’t been received by the agency.

“The agency has suspended all future payments until sufficient evidence is received by the agency.

“If this evidence is not received, this constitutes a breach of contract.

“The agency will seek to recover any funding that is found to have not been delivered in accordance with contractual requirements.”

Mymar’s phoneline goes to answerphone and FE Week was unable to contact its chief executive who according to LinkedIn, has been Bill Haynes since September 2011. The website also listed him as chairman of Ekode Holdings and chief executive of Verridian PLC.

An email on Thursday, January 17, leaked to FE Week by a former Mymar employee, that appears to be from Mr Haynes, said Mymar was ceasing trading with “immediate effect” and that staff would not be paid.

It added: “Sadly and surprisingly we heard yesterday that the SFA were no longer willing to support our position and withdrew the financial support plan, thereby effectively removing our total income by clawing back the entire pay-

FE Week news in brief

157 group grows

The 157 Group has welcomed its 29th member in Leicester College.

Its principal, Verity Hancock, said: “We are excited about adding to the work of the 157 Group, influencing the thinking of policymakers and raising the quality of provision for learners across the sector.”

Peter Roberts, chair of the 157 Group and principal of Leeds City College, said: “The outstanding provision offered by Leicester College will bring a powerful voice to our table and ensure that we are able to represent the ever more diverse constituency served by our sector.”

Students ‘missing’

The Data Service has reported a “significant drop” in learner numbers. It said the issue of missing data on students came to light in providers’ 2012/13 ILR R04 returns. It warned organisations if they did not take action immediately there could be a negative impact on funding, success rates and allocations.

The Data Service said providers had deleted 99 per cent of learners since their last submission. It urged providers to check their ILR submissions.

Colleges get techie

Augmented reality and innovative use of iPads all feature at the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS) Technology for Success Conference.

It is being held at Maple House in Birmingham on Tuesday, February 5.

LSIS programme development manager Bob Powell said: “Delegates will be able to learn from colleges and providers who have not only tried out something new but committed to embedding technology to improve teaching and learning.”

ment due for the month, consequently rendering the business insolvent.

“The money received from investors is simply not enough and without the support of an SFA plan for structured repayment we are unable to attract more.”

The correspondence drew a strong response from the agency whose joint statement with NAS said: “The responsibility for ensuring Mymar meets its obligations to employees rests solely with the company itself and any suggestion the failure to pay staff is due to agency actions is entirely refuted.”

It added: “We have written to learners to advise that we are working to place them with alternative providers, and where necessary employers, so they can complete their learning.

“NAS is using its apprenticeship vacancies system to help find quality opportunities for those who were on an apprenticeship programme with Mymar and Walwyn Trust.

“The agency will be arranging the collection of all learner portfolios from Mymar.

“Any concerned apprentices, parents or guardians can contact the agency’s e-mail address: mymar@skillsfundingagencybis.gov.uk

“For any enquiries regarding any payments due, learners, parents and guardians are encouraged to contact their local Job Centre Plus.”

Apprenticeship revamp ‘needed’

Eleanor Radford

@EleanorRadford

Apprenticeships should be redefined as “intensive three-year training programmes” to help curb the 31 per cent A-levels drop-out rate, new research revealed.

The Policy Exchange thinktank released a report with several recommendations and said there needed to be “a clear alternative route offering high quality technical or vocational provision”. It named apprenticeships as a “key part” of this.

The report, written by Dr Owen Corrigan, said taxpayers lose around £300m a-year with a third of A-level students dropping out when “vocationally-oriented programmes of study may have been more suitable for them”.

And skills gaps affected one-in-five businesses with technical holes being found in more than 50 per cent of those workplaces. Fifty two per cent of employers anticipated difficulties filling roles in science technology engineering and mathematics in the next three years.

“This report advances the case for building a high quality technical and vocational route through the education system from 14 to 19 as

an alternative to traditional academic education,” said the report.

“To guarantee its brand and desirability as a progression destination, and to stimulate more employers to offer this type of training, apprenticeships should be redefined in stronger and clearer terms as an intensive three-year training programme with significant educational and workplace learning requirements.”

The report makes 22 recommendations, including that an element of payment-by-results was reintroduced to “ensure all providers help learners make the right decisions and encourage them to achieve”.

FE Minister Matthew Hancock said: “We strongly agree that vocational education needs transforming for young people to succeed in today’s job market.

“That’s why we have such a vigorous reform programme. We are reforming apprenticeships, introducing traineeships and overhauling the system to recognise only high quality vocational courses that lead directly to a skilled trade or profession.”

Shadow Education Secretary Stephen Twigg said: “Britain risks losing the global race on skills. We need to be as strong as Germany and Switzerland on vocational

education, and as competitive as Singapore and Japan on maths.”

Nevertheless, Dr Corrigan’s report also called for a stronger inspection of technical courses by Ofsted and the establishment of a dedicated vocational commissioning body to sit within the Department for Education (DfE) – planning better provision for these subjects.

He said university technical colleges (UTCs) and employment-focused studio schools were “reinvigorating the landscape with high levels of employer engagement”.

Technical education providers should document all employer contributions to their curriculum, have their facilities accredited, should be served notices to improve if they fail to meet quality standards and Ofsted should inspect information, advice and guidance (IAG) at schools while non-school providers should be incentivised to produce IAG.

Achievement rates for all 16 to 19 providers should be included in the annual DfE performance tables and the report backed plans for a TechBacc qualification to reward students taking high-quality vocational courses alongside core academic skills.

A-level reform plan criticised

FE groups have condemned Education Secretary Michael Gove’s A-level revamp proposals.

Mr Gove said from 2015 pupils would take exams at the end of two-year courses with AS-levels remaining, but as stand-alone exams. A group of leading universities will play a bigger role in maintaining standards.

But a number of sector bodies have rejected his proposals, with University and College Union (UCU) general secretary Sally Hunt, saying: “The secretary of state appears driven to replicate his own schooldays for all.

“While that era and set of qualifications may have suited him very well, they will not satisfy the varied needs of today’s pupils.”

Julian Gravatt, assistant chief executive of the Association of Colleges (AoC), said in FE and sixth form colleges there was “overwhelming support” for the retention of the current A-level structure.

Toni Fazaeli, chief executive of The Institute for Learning said: “We are concerned about reforms that remove the freedom for professional teachers to exercise their judgement about the most appropriate form of assessment for their learners.”

Brian Lightman, of the Association of School and College Leaders, said: “This is a classic case of fixing something that isn’t broken.”

Mr Gove has told Ofqual that A-levels currently did not help to develop a “deep understanding” of subjects. Instead, modular units would be scrapped, with the qualification returning to exams taken at the end of a two-year course. The Department for Education has given Ofqual and awarding organisations an extra year to develop the new A-levels.

Call for education to ‘split’ at 14

Eleanor Radford

@EleanorRadford

Former education secretary and father of the national curriculum Lord Baker has called for a back-to-basics revamp of England’s education system.

The Conservative peer outlined his view that 14-year-olds were given the choice of four pathways at separate institutions in his new book 14-18: A New Vision for Secondary Education.

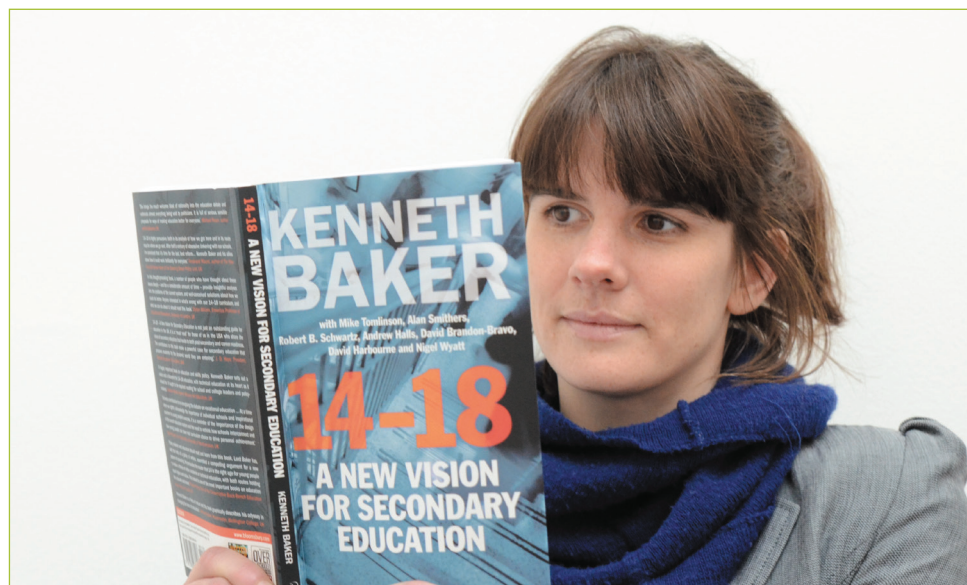
These are liberal arts for academic subjects, technical for specialisms such as engineering, sports and creative arts, or a career course where students would specialise in subjects such as plumbing or catering at FE colleges.

“I think there should be an assessment at 14 to see where your interests lie and the student, with input from parents and teachers, should say which direction they want to take,” Lord Baker, founder of University Technical Colleges (UTCs), told *FE Week*.

He said more emphasis should be put into developing technical and career skills and the different colleges that would develop under his vision would work to get employers on-board to provide work placements and universities to inspire credibility.

In a year when the government has raised the school leaver age to 17 rising to 18 by 2015, and with FE colleges given the go ahead to recruit directly from schools from the age of 14, he said he felt the FE sector needed to “specialise more” and to stop trying to cater for “such a huge range”.

“I think colleges need a basic reform — I’m



FE Week reporter Eleanor Radford reads Lord Baker’s 14-18: A New Vision For Secondary Education

a great fan of them but their strength is in selling courses — very few attempt to round an education,” said Lord Baker, adding that the national curriculum should stop at 14 with pupils continuing to study core subjects such as English and maths until they were 18.

“One of the problems with FE colleges is they try to cater for such a huge range of activity. I think they should specialise more.”

He also warned of the “dangers” of FE colleges recruiting pupils at 14.

“I think the danger is every secondary head in the country will recommend their most difficult students to FE colleges,” he said.

“I think that’s already happening because the policy of government is to squeeze vocational qualifications out of pre-16 education.”

He also conceded the age of 14 could be seen as too young to specialise, but said that in Austria, where specialisms are followed at the age of 14, there was some of the “lowest youth unemployment in the world”.

“This is merely the starting point. I hope I’ve started a great debate but it’ll be up to someone else to pick up the baton and run with it,” said former Home Secretary Lord Baker.

Maggie Galliers, Association of Colleges president, said Lord Baker’s book was “useful” for a “push for a higher status technical route,” but urged caution over its recommendations because it gave no mention of costs.

Lord Baker’s book, 14-18: A New Vision for Secondary Education, is priced at £14.99 and was released on Thursday, January 24.

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Editor's comment

Advice for colleges

Expecting schools to offer impartial careers advice is unfair and unrealistic.

Sixth forms are part of an increasingly competitive market, in which every 16 to 18-year-old learner represents three to five thousand pounds.

If you were running a business would you promote the competition?

Would government investment in face-to-face professional careers advisers solve this problem?

Perhaps, but schools would still have budgets to protect, and where would this army of advisers come from?

Then there's the thorny issue of paying for them - what services would have to miss out?

I'm told learners are increasingly savvy consumers, often making decisions heavily influenced by social networks both off and online.

Therefore, in this competitive market, FE providers need to quit feeling hard done by and promote their unique selling points better.

A good place to start would be promoting their success at getting learners into work with training.

Every FE provider website should have easy access to progression and destination data, which is also shouted about in the course prospectus and, for example, the back of buses.

Expecting schools to refer learners is wishful thinking, you'll need to earn them.

Nick Linford, editor

Correction

The much-vaunted FE Guild is due to be with us later this year and many questions have been raised about its role and structure.

Among those to have looked at the issues was Robin Landman OBE, whose expert piece last week examined gender and racial considerations in its formation.

Before the new FE body comes into existence, however, a number of its expected functions are carried out by the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS).

And it was wrongly stated LSIS would be winding up in March, when in fact its services are due to cease at the end of July.

LSIS chief executive Rob Wye pointed out the error and rightly added: "We don't want the incorrect message given to organisations that use our services."

Have you spotted something wrong with this edition of FE Week?

If so, feel free to tell us about it, including the page number and story headline, and explain what the problem is. Email us at news@feweek.co.uk with Corrections in the subject line.



Plea for Ofsted to inspect school advice

Chris Henwood

@Chris_Henwood

The government has been urged to "bite the bullet" and call Ofsted in to inspect careers guidance services after concerns over the quality and objectivity of advice given to young people.

Association of Colleges policy director Joy Mercer said the watchdog should look at careers guidance during school inspections following a report on the subject by the Education Select Committee.

It identified a "deterioration" in advice since the service became the responsibility of schools in September.

Committee chair Graham Stuart MP questioned the advice of schools who, he said, "put their own interests ahead of that of their pupils, restrict access to other education providers and make the filling of their sixth form places more of a priority than their statutory duty to provide independent and impartial advice and guidance for pupils."

And the dim view on careers guidance was mirrored by Ms Mercer:

"The Departments for Education and Business, Innovation and Skills need to bite the bullet and encourage the regulator to include careers guidance in its regular inspection of schools," she said.

"The committee has recognised that careers advice must be delivered by qualified staff

and schools should hold the matrix standard. This would mirror colleges' service to their students."

City & Guilds chief executive Chris Jones said the committee's report painted a "shameful picture of how the system is failing young people."

He added: "Receiving ill-informed, inappropriate career guidance can have an extensive impact on young peoples' lives, and in turn hinder business and the wider economy."

"What we now need are careers counsellors that are given appropriate training to a recognised standard."

"In addition, colleges and training providers must be better linked with local employers and local enterprise partnerships, to ensure young people have access to high quality work experience."

Lynne Sedgmore, executive director of the 157 Group, said: "The committee's conclusions about the state of guidance in schools are worrying."

However, a Department for Education (DfE) spokesperson said it was too early to judge how careers guidance was delivered with the new system having "only been in place for a term".

The committee looked at how careers guidance was affected by the Education Act 2011, which saw provision of the service shift from the duty of local authorities and delivered by Connexions, itself described by the DfE as "often costly, patchy and of poor quality."

The committee heard from a number of edu-

cation sector big-hitters, including Dr Deirdre Hughes, chair of the National Careers Council, who said there was a potential loss of £28bn to the UK economy if young people were not given the right career guidance.

"We have concerns about the consistency, quality, independence and impartiality of careers guidance now being offered to young people," said the committee report, which said the transfer of responsibility for careers guidance to schools was "regrettable".

Committee chair Mr Stuart called for the National Careers Service (NCS), which he described as "a great innovation for adults," to be extended to support schools.

He said: "We found that the quality and quantity of guidance for young people is deteriorating."

He also called for schools to produce annual careers plans to "ensure they can be held accountable for what they do".

A DfE spokesperson said: "We introduced this new duty [on schools to provide careers guidance] to replace the previous system that was often costly, patchy and of poor quality."

"The duty requires schools to secure independent and impartial careers guidance for their pupils."

"We want head teachers to decide what careers guidance is right for their students and have control over their budgets to provide it. The duty has only been in place for a term — far too early to pass judgment on its success."

Comments

Careers advice 'getting worse,' warns government education committee

This is a subject I have frequently sounded off on. The whole careers guidance issue is integral to improving the employability prospects for young people. Providing multiple quality pathways into the world of work requires a flexible, sophisticated range of supporting mechanisms of guidance, and as the report clearly states,

schools are fully accountable for this. It also requires schools to accept responsibility for ensuring they produce pupils who are fully employable across a range of hard and soft skills, and not leave it to employers, FE colleges and private training providers to plug the gaps they have left.

Peter Cobrin

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FE Week profile

Beatrix Groves ~ her story

Janet Murray

@Jan_Murray

The president of the Institute for Learning talks to FE Week

“I did it all back to front, upside-down and mostly part-time,” says Institute for Learning (IfL) president Beatrix Groves, known to friends as Bea, on how she ended up with a degree and a career in teaching. She came to the profession late, having “absolutely detested” the Catholic single sex secondary school she attended, where discipline ruled. Despite doing well in her O levels, she left as soon as she could, joining the civil service as a record branch clerk.

While she hated working at the local social security office, updating national insurance records and authorising benefit payments, there was no question of changing path. The DHSS was one of the biggest employers on the Tyneside estate where she lived, and besides — having not enjoyed school — the idea of continuing her education seemed like “a ridiculously stupid idea.”

But being laid off by the civil service in the mid 1980s, and becoming one of “Mrs Thatcher’s great four million,” unemployed, came as a shock and Groves spent the next five years in and out (and it was mostly out) of work. While she was determined not to fall into the trap of “getting up late, swanning around the house and going back to bed again,” the experience was dispiriting. “I always assumed, as I was always told at school, that if I got my O levels, I’d be fine,” she recalls. “But that wasn’t the case at all; no matter how well-qualified you were it didn’t mean you were immune from unemployment.”

At the same time, she was struggling with issues in her personal life. Born male, but having felt, since childhood, that she was meant to be female, Groves had started dressing as a woman in secret, but the pretence was starting to take its toll. “It’s a bit like knowing you are left-handed but someone has told you to be right-handed and you’re scared to use your left hand so you carry on using your right until it gets to the point where it’s driving you crazy,” she says.

Discovering the Workers Educational Association (WEA) — the UK’s largest voluntary-sector provider of adult education — helped enormously. Having been picked on constantly at school for being ‘different,’ Groves learnt that education didn’t necessarily have to be “hostile” and that - much to her surprise - people were actually interested in what she had to say.

Evening classes in music appreciation led to a teaching qualification at North Tyneside College, and by the middle of the 1990s, Groves had a string of qualifications (including a first class degree in education and philosophy) and a flourishing portfolio career in teaching, which typically meant juggling at least half a dozen contracts at different institutions, at any one

time.

Groves set up the Association of Part Time Tutors (APTT) in 1995 and (while admitting to being a “former sceptic”), joined the IfL a decade later – just before membership became compulsory on the basis that “it was better to be looking out than looking in.”

One of the things that motivated her to stand for its council — and later IfL president — was her decision, in 2008, to ‘come out’ in women’s clothing. “I remember looking at myself in the mirror and thinking to myself, ‘I can’t carry on pretending for the rest of my life.’ I don’t think it was me saying to myself that I had to be a woman from now on, it was more that I couldn’t keep it a secret any more. I couldn’t keep on lying on a constant basis.”

While confronting years of secrecy and telling her family, friends and partner, initially drove her into depression, it has proved a positive move in the long-term. For around a year, she dressed in women’s clothing some of the time (and usually only in informal circumstances), and in 2009, made the decision to “go full-time.”

“I couldn’t carry on pretending for the rest of my life”

But going to employers — and there were over a dozen of them, all with varying levels of commitment to their equality and diversity policies — wasn’t easy. “Some of them [her employers] hadn’t got a clue how to deal with it because they just didn’t see it coming, which is alarming to a certain extent,” says Groves. “For some it was a big rigmarole and for some it was, ‘Oh, you’ve got to meet with the chief executive and talk this through.’ Some were better than others but at the end of the day it proved that mostly the bureaucracy worked alright. Mostly.”

Telling students was far easier; having planned to return to work as Bea (Groves was previously known as Bob) after the summer holiday, she found most students were completely unfazed. “I thought when I turned up for the first session I would have no-one in my class and my career would be over,” she recalls. “And it didn’t happen. In fact, I’ve discovered that 99 per cent of adult students I come across are just as nice to me today as they ever were and just take me as they come. They’re concerned with how good I am at teaching them, not what I am wearing...but I’m still astonished every time I come in. Four years on, every time I do, I think ‘I must be doing something right.’”



Her decision to stand as IfL president was driven at least in part, by a desire to show that “trans people could do anything,” she says. And having gone in “with reform in mind,” member voice has been a key priority, particularly around the issue of micro-management. “Everything is standardised and templated and conforms to a policy somewhere along the line which means that the levels of professionalism have shrunk dramatically...but if the IfL wants to make its members become more professional we can only do that if we can do something about micro management – and that is incredibly difficult in a land where Ofsted rules,” she says.

The benefits of uniformity have “strangled the possibility of individual identity and action,” she says – an issue she feels strongly about, both in her personal and professional life. “I’m not dressing like this for amusement. It is an expression of identity...which is about valuing people’s contributions, their own ways of doing things, respecting who they are and looking at the positive aspects of what they can contribute...I have taught in so many different places, met so many different people, and

worked with so many different organisations over the years and then there is the whole business with having to struggle with gender identity... my assumption is that people say, ‘She’s been through the mill, she must know what she is talking about.’”

It’s a personal thing

What’s your favourite book?

Eagle in the Snow, by Wallace Breen

What did you want to be when you were younger?

A train driver - don’t all kids of my generation?

What do you do to switch off from work?

Go comatose in front of the TV

If you could invite anyone to a dinner party, living or dead, who would it be?

Ludwig Wittgenstein

What would your super power be?

Telepathy

FE Week Experts

Much 'to be decided' on model for trainees

Traineeships were put firmly on the FE agenda by sector minister Matthew Hancock this month when he revealed plans for a new pre-apprenticeship scheme. Chris Jones takes up the issue and explains what he thinks needs to be considered when the final traineeship model is drawn up.

Further education Minister Matthew Hancock's recent announcement about the consultation paper on traineeships has been broadly welcomed by the industry, including us at City & Guilds.

As Mr Hancock points out, this discussion presents an opportunity for the government to learn from the success of existing traineeships and to put into practice the advice of training providers and employers alike.

City & Guilds already has a large portfolio of qualifications that prepares young people for the world of work. These have demonstrated there is a clear demand for young people to have access to some form of consistent pre-training for employment or apprenticeships.

Obviously, we are waiting for more information and looking forward to working with government to develop traineeships, and so much is still to be decided.

However, from our experience, we believe traineeships should consider the following points.

Firstly, young people need practical maths and English and employability skills.

One of the most important components of the proposed traineeship model is its focus on English, maths and employability skills. We regularly hear from employers that the combination of functional literacy and numeracy and generic employability skills is too often lacking in the candidates they see.

Young people are faced with continually shifting challenges within the labour market. They are required to demonstrate ever more flexible skill-sets and competencies.

With this in mind, it's essential that training in employability and basic literacy and numeracy keeps up with these changes. This would support young people to enter the workplace with both the confidence and the core attributes that employers need.

Secondly, employers need to be involved and engaged in traineeships. One of the strengths of the pre-apprenticeship offering we have been developing has been our engagement with employers and recognition of the critical role they play in making the programmes a success.

Their involvement helps to ensure that people develop the necessary skills before starting an apprenticeship.

We also know, through our recent Ways into Work report, that young people are eager to



learn more about the world of work at a young age, 88 per cent of 16 to 18-year-olds said that a visit to an employer would be extremely useful to them, and yet just 26 per cent had been given this opportunity.

The traineeship proposals also include work experience as a crucial part of the programme. We believe that nationally-recognised work experience is a fundamental transition for young people into the world of work, providing young people with tangible experience to include on their CVs. It is great to see it being given the attention it deserves.

And finally, traineeships must be accredited and transferrable. To help trainees progress through education and into employment, traineeships need to include a nationally-recognised qualification and standardised course elements — for example, job-related skills at levels one and two.

This would not only give the trainees a real sense of what it may be like to participate in an apprenticeship or other work-based programme, it would also ensure they develop the skills employers need and that these skills are transferable within the same sector. Ultimately, this would place trainees in a better position as they embark on their careers.

Alongside this, traineeships need to be flexible and adaptable in order to suit the needs of individual employers and trainees. However, as with all the programmes we deliver, we believe that the focus must also be on quality, structure and a tangible end result.

The traineeship scheme must be seen as a quality investment, and that's why we will be working with the government to explore ways to develop an approval rating for colleges and training providers delivering them. The government's commitment to establishing high quality traineeships and work placements is certainly a very encouraging step that could benefit young people and employers alike.

Chris Jones, chief executive and director general at City & Guilds

Careers guidance is for life, not just for classrooms

The Education Select Committee's review of careers guidance came to worrying conclusions about the quality of service being offered to young people, but, as committee adviser Dr Tristram Hooley points out, it's not just schoolchildren who need good advice.

Since the election major changes have been made to the careers education and guidance. These were not mentioned in the manifestos of the governing parties nor have they received much press coverage.

However, these changes have big implications for all learners and for young people in particular.

The Connexions service has been closed, the responsibility for career guidance relocated to schools, and the statutory requirements for careers education and work-related learning removed.

The Education Select Committee report highlighted many of these changes and led to a flurry of press coverage.

One of the problems with the current debate about careers education and guidance is that it tends to focus on schools, as if people only make career choices in school.

“Young people need opportunities to learn about alternatives to school”

This is not to say that careers shouldn't be an important part of the school system, but rather to note that no matter how well schools address careers, they will never be able to do it all.

Career is a lifelong issue and therefore should be of concern for everyone interested in lifelong learning.

A key problem is the disconnect that exists between schools policy (overseen by DfE) and policy for adults (overseen by BIS).

Those who are under 19, but not in the school system are often forgotten, despite the fact that many of them would benefit from more career support.

Meanwhile BIS is trying to serve adults through the National Careers Service (NCS) while forgetting that adult learners who are in the FE and skills sector are also developing their careers.

There is a real need for those in FE to work closely with the NCS and to embrace both careers education and guidance as an integral part of the programmes that they offer.

Careers work speaks to the individual. It encourages people to take control of their lives and to be purposeful in driving their direction and development. At the heart of this is a strong



commitment to lifelong learning.

The FE and skills sector should support careers education and guidance within the school system, as delivered by the NCS and within their own institutions for three reasons.

Firstly, young people need opportunities to learn about alternatives to school and advice to help them decide when to take these alternatives. Without careers support there is a danger that schools monopolise the pre-19 system and squeeze alternative provision out.

Secondly, supporting learners to think about careers whilst they are learning can help to retain them within the education system and enhance their performance.

Learners are willing to do the difficult bits of courses if they believe that this will take them closer to their goals.

Careers education and guidance helps learners to clarify their goals and understand what they require to achieve them.

Finally, careers provision can help learners to maximise the impact of their learning. If they are able to reflect on what they are good at and to identify the best place that their skills could be used they are more likely to make successful transitions and to value and utilise what they have learned.

Careers work aids this reflection and supports transitions to work and further learning.

In the long run, these issues need to be picked up and supported by policy. A future policy needs to move beyond a compartmentalised approach and recognise that people develop their careers across their learning, work and lives.

Further education should be at the heart of this both offering alternatives to school and opportunities for those who wish to return to learning and develop their careers.

The aspiration should therefore be to develop a lifelong career development system that serves both individual aspirations and the effective functioning of the education system and the labour market.

Dr Tristram Hooley, reader in career development at the University of Derby and head of the International Centre for Guidance Studies

FE Week Experts

It's time for impartial advice for learners

The Education Select Committee looked at the issue of careers guidance and produced a report that questioned the impartiality of schools now tasked with providing the service. Graham Hoyle OBE puts forward his suggestions to remedy the problem.

Lord Baker of the Baker-Dearing Trust has proposed that at age 14, pupils should make a choice to go down one of four educational pathways for the next four years of their lives.

Even if his ideas are too radical for a government to follow, the fact is that the educational landscape is already increasingly complex at 14 with the arrival of Lord Baker's own UTCs, free schools and studio schools.

It is not surprising therefore that the Education Select Committee argues that schoolchildren should start receiving advice on their options, including careers guidance, earlier than in Year 11, the GCSE exams year.

The committee has produced a powerful report with its conclusions strengthened by the views of young people themselves who took part in the inquiry.

These views have rather disappointingly been relegated to the report's annexes and I would urge anyone to read these first before they start to read the main text.

The young people's comments echo what our members hear from their apprentices and trainees on the frontline every day.

The young people talk about the value of

work-related learning which the coalition government has decided is no longer a statutory obligation for schools and we are in strong agreement with the committee that the obligation should be restored through the statutory guidance.

The report rightly highlights the dangers of the lack of access to impartial advice for pupils, particularly with regard to guidance about apprenticeships and other vocational options.

“One teacher from every secondary school should become the apprenticeship champion for their school”

The MPs are especially concerned about schools with sixth forms, which have a vested interest in encouraging as many as possible of their students to stay on to do A-levels when some of those students would benefit much more from pursuing alternative options.

The Raising the Participation Age initiative, accompanied by the proposed new traineeships, will offer a range of choices at 16 that should

hopefully reduce the number of young people not in education, employment, or training (NEETs) and cut the number of course drop-outs where the UK has traditionally fared badly, particularly in respect of 17-year-olds.

But it will only be effective if young people are receiving sound advice on their choices and as the committee MPs say, this should include impartial and face-to-face guidance.

We proposed to DfE several years ago that its training provider members should be allowed to go into schools on teacher training Inset days and give a presentation to teachers on apprenticeships.

The presentation would cover a generic description of the apprenticeship system and benefits and be delivered where possible by a combination of apprentices who have previously attended that school, their current employers and the organising training provider.

It would also signpost the school, and its pupils, to the full range of apprenticeship opportunities in the area.

We also believe that at least one teacher from every secondary school should undertake work experience with an apprenticeship provider and become the apprenticeship champion for their school.

As early advocates of the strengthening of Ofsted's role in checking on the quality of the advice being offered in schools, we are greatly concerned by the committee's identification of a disconnect between Ofsted's understanding of its new responsibilities and the minister's view



on what inspectors should be doing.

The recommendation that schools should be required to publish an annual careers plan which shows evidence of impartial advice being made available would appear to be a good way of starting to tackle the issue.

We support a widening of the National Careers Service's remit to cover young people as well as adults, which would put it on the same footing as services in Scotland and Wales.

We also back the committee's recommendation that the National Apprenticeship Service should be given access to all schools without waiting to be invited.

Graham Hoyle OBE, chief executive of the Association of Employment and Learning Providers

Caution on Baker's bold education change call

Lord Baker's new book, 14-18: A New Vision for Education, sets out radical changes to the education system and includes contributions from several sector stakeholders. Maggie Galliers delivers her verdict on the book and evaluates the view laid out by Lord Baker.

The central idea in Lord Baker's new book is that the English education system should be re-shaped around transfer ages of nine and 14.

Lord Baker has written three of the book's chapters and has carefully chosen seven men as co-contributors.

Different authors have different viewpoints, but the common themes are that the current education system is excessively focused on academic achievement, that a strong technical alternative needs to be developed and that we can be confident in trusting 14-year-olds and their parents to make positive choices about their future.

Lord Baker goes further than his co-contributors in putting forward the wholesale re-organisation of the English school system, but he does not examine fully the practicalities or costs of this proposal so it is more a vision than a manifesto.

His proposition is a bold one given that the age ranges of 23,000 primary schools, 3,000 secondary schools and 300 colleges would have to change and the education estate would need to be transformed to accommodate three-tier

education.

Lord Baker proposes four "pathways" at age 14, each taught in "self contained" institutions. While there is certainly merit in pathways post-14 which recognise, in the words of Lord Baker that "skills and knowledge are not mutually exclusive...they are mutually complementary", there is a danger that, as with earlier reforms, this emphasis on structures could become a distraction from more important questions about what young people should learn, how they should be assessed and how they should be supported with their transition into adult life.

“My experience of reform is that it is best to carry people with you”

Although Lord Baker argues that pupils would choose between different education routes, the reality could be that the new 14-18 colleges would be making the choices and that local hierarchies between the technical, academic, sports and career colleges would begin to develop.

I came away from this book feeling that an opportunity had been missed. It's interesting to

hear new perspectives from a Harvard professor, a middle school head and a private school headmaster about 11 to 19 education, but I wondered why the book lacked other perspectives.

Several authors referred to Professor Alison Wolf's reforms suggesting that they did not go far enough. It would have been good to have had a response from her. It would also have been more balanced to have had a stronger college perspective on the issues raised.

FE colleges have been the midwives of the university technical college movement, they educate more 16 to 18-year-olds than the school sector, and they were recently given power to enrol students directly at the age of 14.

Changes are needed, but my experience of reform is that it is best to carry people with you rather than impose reform.

The college staff I know are realistic about the need to raise standards and to adapt to the changing economy, but they are also frustrated at the constant policy and structural changes introduced by successive governments.

We have seen initiatives, programmes and qualifications come and go and while it is refreshing to see such a high profile push for a higher status technical route, the requirement for such wide ranging reorganisation based on an age break at 14 needs to be evaluated carefully.

This is why the Department for Education's recent announcement about direct recruitment at 14 is so helpful. It allows a few colleges to build



on what they have already done locally, but to do so in the knowledge that they will be properly funded for their work.

Kenneth Baker's book is a useful addition to the argument, but it is not the final word.

Maggie Galliers, Association of Colleges president



A SNEAK PEEK AT THE AoC IN INDIA SUPPLEMENT

THE SUPPLEMENT WILL BE SENT OUT TO FE WEEK SUBSCRIBERS WITH THE NEXT EDITION



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH **nocn** NATIONAL OPEN COLLEGE NETWORK

Photos by Nick Linford



From left: Sue Rimmer, South Thames College, Andy Wilson, Westminster Kingsway College, Dawn Ward, Burton and South Derbyshire College, Matthew Hancock, Skills Minister, Asha Khemka, West Nottinghamshire College, Stella-Ngozi Mbubaegbu, Highbury College, Sunaina Mann, Nescot and Richard Atkins, Exeter College.

Colleges make New Delhi move

Nick Linford
@NickLinford

A host of UK colleges are hoping a new initiative in India will allow them to capitalise on their FE expertise. A number of senior management members made the journey east for its launch and were joined by *FE Week* editor Nick Linford and reporter, Shane Mann.

On first hearing that 30 FE colleges were to have a permanent presence in India I was intrigued. I asked myself, is there not enough of a challenge educating learners and supporting employers during tough economic conditions in the UK? Why use precious resources chasing contracts in unfamiliar countries, where many have tried and failed before?

And was Sir Michael Wilshaw, the chief inspector for Ofsted, right to ask in his first speech to FE colleges, if international work is a distraction from the urgent need to raise the standards of teaching and learning for our own learners?

My next question was whether it was worth the time and financial cost of flying to India with *FE Week* colleague Shane Mann

to find out. That was easy to answer — yes.

AoC [Association of Colleges] India is an important development in FE. It is a story we couldn't possibly do justice to from our office in London.

For this reason, we have produced a supplement, in partnership with NOCN, on the development. It starts by introducing you to the colleges taking part (31 at the time of going to print), each one investing £20k for a two-year membership to AoC in India.

We then introduce you to Sannam S4, the consultants with the contract from AoC India to be the eyes, ears and representatives on the ground.

Next up comes interviews with the chair of the group, Asha Khemka OBE, and project director John Mountford.

Further education Minister Matthew Hancock was also visiting India seeking opportunities, learning about India's plans to train half a billion people by 2022 and, as a Parliamentary cricket team member, quite reasonably taking a spectator seat for the one-day international between England and India in Changralat.

We were granted an exclusive interview with the minister en route the official launch party for AoC India, held at the UK High Commissioner's residence in New Delhi.

As reported in the last edition of *FE Week*, AoC in India is by no means the first nor the only FE college venture into the Indian education market.

What struck me was that by clubbing together the colleges have chosen a relatively low risk form of investment. The use of an Indian market entry specialist firm makes a lot of sense. Sannam S4 is well-placed from New Delhi to quickly spot a good opportunity from an unrealistic or poor one. They have also already made impressive headway in arranging meetings with the relevant Indian agencies.

The challenge now will be not just to convert ambition into returns on investment, but also dealing with the tricky operational and strategic issues, presumably familiar to all new partnerships made up of competing businesses.

I also attended the official opening of New College Nottingham's International Lifestyles Academy, to which its East Midlands parent college is contributing curriculum design and quality assurance.

Finally, as for my most unexpected experience in India? That was being invited to stay for dinner after the AoC in India launch and being told by the ambassador's wife that the apples in the crumble were a gift from the King of Butan.

The 31 members of AoC in India

- Barking & Dagenham College
- Barnet and Southgate College
- Belfast Metropolitan College
- Blackburn College
- Birmingham Metropolitan College
- Bournville College
- Bradford College
- Bournemouth and Poole College
- Burton and South Derbyshire College
- City and Islington College
- City of Westminster College
- Edinburgh College
- Exeter College
- Grimsby Institute
- Guildford College of FE and HE
- Harrow College
- Havering College of FE and HE
- Henley College Coventry
- Highbury College
- Isle of Wight College
- NESCOT (NE Surrey College of Tech)
- New College Durham
- Oaklands College
- Solihull College
- South Thames College
- Stockton Riverside College
- Westminster Kingsway College
- West Nottinghamshire College
- Walsall College
- Warrington Collegiate
- Ytsrad Mynach College





From left: Skills Minister, Matthew Hancock, Asha Khemka, principal of West Nottinghamshire College and Martin Doel, chief executive of the Association of Colleges, speaking at the launch event



From left: Martin Binns, Bradford College, Ronnie Todd, Bradford College, David Taylor, New College Durham, Natalie Warren-Green, Highbury College, Sanjeev Ohri, Dudley College, Manjeet Kumari-Lal, Wall-sall College, Nicole Barber Westminster Kingsway College, Myrtle Northage, Warrington Collegiate, Sally MacPherson, Havering College, Rosy Banwait Burton and South Derbyshire College



FE Week campus round-up

sponsored by **empra**

Medium rare opportunity for art students



From Left: Nyta Nkansah-Nyarko, 18, from Dagenham; Terrel Wilson, 18, from Dagenham and Ajay Pabial, 18 from Goodmayes

A former steakhouse has been transformed into a gallery space for young artists to display their raw talent and most well done pieces.

Art and design students from Havering College of Further and Higher Education, in Essex, have adapted the empty Outback Steakhouse in The Brewery Shopping Centre, Romford, to house an exhibition examining the theme Sense of Place.

Students were encouraged to explore their feelings about Romford and to use things which used to be in the restaurant to create their work.

The Outback Art House will display work by the students as well as by local artists, and will be installed, curated and marketed by the students.

Grace Thomas, 18, from Chadwell Heath, said: "It was strange to think we were creating art in a former restaurant, but it made you think about how venues can make a difference to how people view your work."

The project is run by the college and the Romford Contemporary Arts Programme, a Havering Council initiative to promote contemporary artists, and will run until Saturday, February 16.

Rising volleyball star does good



Kieran Good receives his sport maker of the month certificate from Stuart Butler, Sport Makers' lead for Kent

A young volleyball star received a national award for his dedication to helping others get the most out of the sport.

Kieran Good, 17 and from Cliffe Woods, near Gillingham, was named sports maker of the month and won £50-worth of sports equipment after completing 10 hours of voluntary sports coaching in the community.

Kieran, who studies sport and exercise sciences at MidKent College, is a member of the South East England under-18 volleyball squad and won the award for coaching the under-17s and refereeing local league games.

He said: "I'm really pleased to have been

recognised for my volunteering.

"I like to think I've helped improve the ability of new and existing volleyball players and given them the chance to play sport competitively."

The Sport Makers organisation aims to encourage volunteering.

Its Kent representative, Stuart Butler, said: "The overall aim is to get at least 40,000 young people committing 10 hours or more to volunteer in sports or other physical activities.

"Kieran has done fantastically well and we hope this recognition encourages others to follow in his footsteps."



Level three professional Cookery student Adam Simons, 18 in the Quad'rانت kitchen

Surprise inspection leads to high health rating

Budding chefs at a Midland college restaurant have been deemed squeaky clean after a surprise inspection by environmental health inspectors.

The Quad'rانت eaterie, at Chesterfield College, is staffed partly by catering and hospitality students and was awarded a rare grade five rating, which is the highest grade possible.

Ellie Wynn, head of learning for hospitality and catering, said: "We're so proud of all the staff and students for all of their hard work.

"As the inspection is a complete surprise on the day it's fantastic to see that our everyday practice is of such a high calibre to gain the highest grade possible."

The Quad'rانت serves lunch and evening meals to students, staff and the general public.

Ms Wynn added: "Our busy restaurant gives our hospitality and catering students great industry experience and this glowing report is a great advocate of the high environmental health standards that both our students and staff work to achieve."



From left: Oliver Medley, 17, Jonathan Disley, Head of Quality and A levels, Honor Harvey, 17, David Mayers, Lecturer in Mathematics, and Ben Bailey, 16

Maths whizzes find formula for success

One silver and three bronzes added up to success for a team of brainboxes taking part in a prestigious competition held by the UK Mathematics Trust (UKMT).

Macclesfield College AS Level maths students took part in the UKMT senior challenge, where competitors had 90 minutes to answer 25 multiple choice questions under exam conditions.

Gold prizes were awarded to the top 10 per cent of entrants, while the next 20 per cent achieve silver and the next 30 per cent gain bronze.

Of the five students from Macclesfield College in the competition, one was awarded silver and three were awarded bronze.

Macclesfield College maths lecturer David Mayers said: "This is the first time the college has entered the competition and I'm really proud of all our participating students who performed exceptionally well."

The UKMT is a charity that aims to advance the education of children and young people in maths and its competitions are the largest in the UK with 600,000 students taking part.

Want your college or training provider to appear on these pages?

Send your stories with pictures to news@feweek.co.uk including names, ages and course of students where applicable

Celebs drop in for Walsall fashion week



From left: fashion student Ellesse Malcolm, 19, from Wolverhampton, and Achieving Together student, Dermot McNamara, 18, and Business student Chloe Adcock, 18, from Cannock.

A Midland student bucked the trend by becoming the first at her college to put on a fashion week.

Chloe Adcock, a business student at Walsall College, came up with the idea after staging a few smaller fashion shows for a local clothes store. She teamed up with fellow student Dermot McNamara and the pair successfully hosted a six-day charity event featuring catwalk shows, style advice, hair and beauty demonstrations and an exhibition of vintage fashion, plus celebrity guest appearances.

Chloe, who has also set up her own

modelling agency, said: "I eventually want to go into event management and this is a great way of getting work experience.

"I also realised that there has never been an event like this in Walsall so thought it would be a great way to bring the community together and showcase the talent of young local designers."

Fashion students from the college styled models backstage and showed visitors how to customise clothes while funds were raised for a different charity each day including Acorns Children's Hospice and Action for Children.



Level three BTec extended diploma in music students at West Nottinghamshire College meet SFA boss. From left: Darren Hodgkinson, 44, Elliott Wheeler, SFA's Kim Thorneywork, Thomas Collins, both 17, and Medioka Bakoko, 48

SFA chief visits new development

Musically-minded Midland students met the boss of UK adult learning when she dropped by to see college developments first hand.

Kim Thorneywork, Skills Funding Agency interim chief executive, visited West Nottinghamshire College to see how work was progressing on a £24m revamp, including a state-of-the-art centre for creative arts and digital technologies called Create.

She also spoke to students, staff and governors at several college sites across Mansfield and Ashfield.

Ms Thorneywork said: "I'm incredibly impressed by the progress the college has made in refurbishing and rebuilding its estate.

"West Notts College has a very clear vision for its future. It's got a clear focus on what it is doing for local employment and its communities and is absolutely driving forward on these agendas."

The college's Kirkby-in-Ashfield-based construction academy came in for special praise, described by Ms Thorneywork as having "a real buzz".

She added: "There are many young people learning excellent skills there and I was very impressed."

Principal Asha Khemka OBE said: "It was an honour to show Kim how we're investing in new buildings and high-quality facilities to enhance the learning experience."

Students put on a show for local ice hockey team

Performing arts students were literally dancing in the aisles at a Midland ice hockey match after being asked to provide the interval entertainment.

Students from City College Coventry, which sponsored the match between local outfit Coventry Blaze and the Hull Stingrays, provided live entertainment for the evening.

Music students warmed up the crowd in the bar before the match and student Lauren McAuley sang the national anthem to mark the 5.15pm face-off.

And dance students performed a specially-choreographed routine in the stands at half time, while tutors braved the ice to take part in a fun relay.

Adrian Middup, course organiser for the level three extended diploma in music, said: "Teaming up with Coventry Blaze gave us the chance to offer exciting opportunities to students on a range of courses and it was great to see each individual grab them with both hands.

"They learned a lot on the evening and we can now build on it in class."



Ben Venson, 18, and Michelle Jay, 18, performing at the Coventry Blaze match

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Hannah-Corinne Patterson receiving her award for commitment to learning from Wella representative Luke Salter

Hairdressing student is streaks ahead

An award-winning young London stylist has been given the chance to show she's a cut above the rest by passing on her skills to younger students.

Croydon College hairdressing and beauty therapy student Hannah-Corinne Patterson, 19 and from Brockley, was chosen to run workshops for Year 11 youngsters at Norbury Manor Business and Enterprise College for Girls, in Surrey, after winning a college award for commitment to learning.

The five-week program of hairdressing-related learning activities was designed to engage younger students with vocational training, as well as allowing Hannah-Corinne to gain teaching skills.

She said: "When I first started I was very nervous, but over the weeks I built up my confidence and I now don't want it to end.

"The pupils have really come a long way and I am very pleased to have had this opportunity."

Priceless industry insight for learners



Students perform at Kensington and Chelsea College's networking event. From left: Aviv Gavra, Amber Hunter, Bonnie Jane O'Meara, Maria Nambi and Shaniece Stewart

Young musicians and producers were all ears when top music industry experts gave talks as part of a two-day networking event at a London college.

MTV music editor Lindsay Wesker, Choice FM DJ Dave VJ and world music artist Najma Akhtar spoke to music and media students at Kensington and Chelsea College about the changing face of music, their own careers and how to get ahead in the industry.

Lindsay told students they needed a strong knowledge of music, its history and how record companies worked and to make sure as artists

they were offering something different.

Meanwhile Akhtar urged them to broaden their horizons by exposing themselves to music from different cultures.

Paul Hall, the college's head of music and media, said: "It is a real privilege to have such well-known and respected names from the industry take time out to meet the next generation of talent.

"Our students not only had the opportunity to network with our influential guests, but also gained the kind of advice you just can't put a price on."

'Gifted' student's videogame to be turned into a franchise

A media student who taught himself computer programming was "shocked" when technology giant Sony wanted to turn his game into a franchise.

Liam Cozens, 17, who studies BTec media production at Canterbury College, spent a year putting together his 3D downloadable game Robots: Extreme Wars Live.

His game was inspired by the TV show Robot Wars, which ended in 2004 and where contestants pitted homemade robots against each other in an arena full of hazards.

Robots: Extreme Wars Live allows players to relive the game this, battling robots of different shapes and sizes in a variety of arenas.

Liam said: "Funnily enough, I'm not much of a gamer but I did watch the Robot Wars TV show when it was on and played some of the spin-off games. I decided to see if I could make a better version myself and that was how I got started."

When the game was finished, Liam approached the website for Roaming Robots, a touring spin-off of the TV series.

The website producers had wanted to develop a game for years, and were impressed by Liam's version.

The game was launched for PCs and Macs in October and has proved popular, but Liam never imagined this was only the beginning.

Much to his surprise, Sony contacted him to say they were interested in developing the game for other platforms, meaning Liam could see his game being played on Sony's multi-million selling console, PlayStation or the PSP handheld device.

He said: "I was shocked when Sony got in



Media production student Liam Cozens' homemade videogame could become a Sony franchise

touch. When I was making the game I thought it might make a minor impact and then fade away."

Sony has also asked him to continue developing the game, creating extra levels which can then be downloaded by players.

The interest from Sony was surprising for Liam as he's never done anything like this before. In order to create the game, Liam first had to teach himself how to write computer

programmes from scratch, using books and internet tutorials.

"Just learning the basics of programming took me two months," he said.

Following the success of his first game, he is now considering specialising in game development as part of his BTec.

Zoran Tesic, head of Canterbury College's media department, said: "This is excellent and we are very proud of Liam's achievement.

He is currently studying a creative diploma and is thinking about specialising in games development next year.

"We are excited to work with such a gifted and motivated student and that we are able to help him progress in his education and push his games development skills and career even further."

Visit www.roamingrobots.co.uk to find out more about Robots: Extreme Wars Live.

Jobs

FE Week publication dates Feb 2013

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
28 EDITION 54	29	30	31 FEBRUARY	1	2	3
4 EDITION 55	5	6	7	8	9	10
11 EDITION 56	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25 EDITION 57	26	27	28			

Principal; Norfolk University Technical College

Circa £80,000 (negotiable) plus performance related pay

Norfolk University Technical College (UTC) is a new, exciting and dynamic educational institution, focused on advanced engineering and energy skills, which will open in Norwich in September 2014 as part of the TEN Group. The Board is seeking to appoint an outstanding candidate to lead the establishment and development of this flagship college.

Norfolk UTC will offer a dedicated focus on science, technology, engineering and maths delivered to learners from 14-19 in a 21st Century work-based environment using innovative teaching methods based upon "Technical Challenges".

We need YOU to help us deliver our vision!

When you start the role, there will be a building but no staff nor students. You will have the full backing of the Board, the dedicated support of educational partners within the TEN Group and the commitment and drive of the UEA and local businesses who believe in the our Vision. You will have the clarity of purpose, strength of character and commitment to succeed that will enable the delivery of the new educational model for the UTC.

Your challenge will be to transform the vision into reality; you will build your own team; develop and grow partnerships with local schools, employers, colleges and universities; and actively promote Norfolk UTC to encourage students and parents to choose a steeper, more demanding but ultimately more fulfilling route to success.

Can you make a significant difference to Norfolk's education?

Applications should be submitted by 12 noon on Friday 8 February 2013. Selection will be held in February/March 2013 with appointment in April 2013 for a start in September 2013.

FOR FULL DETAILS OF THE ROLE, RELATED INFORMATION AND TO APPLY PLEASE VISIT [HTTP://UTCPRINCIPAL.TENGROUP.ORG.UK](http://UTCPRINCIPAL.TENGROUP.ORG.UK)



Principal/Chief Executive

- > COMPETITIVE SIX-FIGURE SALARY
- > ATTRACTIVE BENEFITS PACKAGE
- > RELOCATION PACKAGE
- > SUPPORTED PROGRESSION INTO CHIEF EXECUTIVE ROLE

Are you INNOVATIVE, INSPIRING and AMBITIOUS?

MidKent College comprises three key elements: MKC Training Services, which provides all of the training for the Royal School of Military Engineering at Chatham; our new £86 million campus at Medway; and our Maidstone Campus, which is currently undergoing a major refurbishment.

As one of the biggest and best providers of further and higher education in the country, we are now on the hunt for an exceptional new principal who will take over as principal/chief executive from 2015.

From September 2013 we are separating out the roles of principal and chief executive. Stephen Grix will continue part-time as the chief executive responsible for the strategic direction of the College and MKC Training Services. The successful candidate for this post will spend their first two years leading the College as principal and from 2015 will move into the combined role of principal/chief executive.

Visit www.midkent.ac.uk/principal for more information and to apply for this life-changing career opportunity.

Alternatively call HR director Andrea Ashman for an informal discussion on 01634 383544.

Closing date: Monday 25 February 2013 Interview dates: Tuesday 19 & Wednesday 20 March 2013



MidKent College is an equal opportunities employer



MidKent College



ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL Faculty of Foundation Learning

Salary within the range: £55 -£60K

We are seeking an individual to join the Senior Management Team of a college committed to promoting a culture of excellence and passionate about contributing to the local community.

This is a generic post that will give you the opportunity to further develop your leadership skills in all aspects of Human Resource, Performance and Quality Management.

You will be responsible for the effective leadership and development of an innovative curriculum to meet the needs of the diverse student body with particular responsibility for leading the faculty that encompasses the Schools of Foundation Learning, Employability & Community Education, Functional Skills and Learning Support.

All applicants who have a disability and meet the minimum criteria for the job will be interviewed.



The successful candidate will be required to undertake an enhanced DBS check.

For vacancy details and application form please visit our website at www.tcat.ac.uk (please do not send CVs) Alternatively please email: jobs@tcat.ac.uk or contact Telford College, Haybridge Road, Wellington, Telford, Shropshire TF1 2NP - 01952 642200.

Closing Date for Applications: Thursday 14 February 2013

Interview Date: Wednesday 6 and Thursday 7 March 2013

NO AGENCIES

www.tcat.ac.uk

"Where great futures begin and every learner matters"



Assistant Principal, Funding, Planning and Resources

c. £50,000 pa Relocation package available Ref. TC147

Tameside College is the leading provider of post 16 education in the Borough of Tameside which lies to the east of Manchester. With over 6,000 students, the College provides a broad range of pre and post 16 provision and higher level programmes. Hyde Clarendon Sixth Form College is part of the Tameside College family and over the past 3 years has consistently achieved the best A Level success rates in the Borough. The College sponsors Droylsden Academy in East Manchester.

Tameside College is seeking to appoint an Assistant Principal with strategic responsibility for funding and planning within the College.

Are you:

- An MIS specialist with a proven track record of managing the student record department in a large FE College?
- A strategic thinker who knows how to turn vision into deliverable plans?
- A good networker who can guide the College through the challenges and opportunities arising from the changing funding methodologies?
- Capable of making a major contribution within a dynamic management team?
- Ambitious to develop your role by providing direct support to the VP Resources across a range of resource functions?

To be successful in this role, you will need excellent people management skills, a thorough understanding of how FE funding works, and experience of using technology to deliver high quality management information. You will also have a successful track record in leading significant and quantifiable change in further education.

If you would like to talk informally about this position before applying, please call Chris Robinson, Vice Principal on 0161 908 6671.

Closing date: Friday 8th February 2013.

Interview date: Friday 15th February 2013.

For further details apply online at www.tameside.ac.uk/jobs.asp quoting ref. TC147.

Human Resources, Tameside College, Beaufort Road, Ashton-under-Lyne OL6 6NX.

Telephone: 0161 908 6643. Minicom: 0161 908 6610.

The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.



LIFE CHANGING LAKES COLLEGE

Lakes College is situated on the edge of the beautiful Lake District National Park and Solway coast. Our new, state of the art single site has been expanded for two new exciting capital developments, a 14-19 performing arts centre and a new construction skills centre to meet the skills needs of the Britain's Energy Coast after successfully securing £7m of funding from local stakeholders.

COURSE LEADER – PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

An initial salary of circa £26.5k – £33.5k dependent upon teaching qualifications and experience. We offer 42 days annual leave plus up to 3 days for Christmas shut down period; 8 bank holidays and 2 discretionary days plus a final salary pension scheme and additional benefits package.

Lakes College currently offers a successful portfolio of commercial and professional business management programmes up to level 7 and we are looking to expand this provision to offer CIPD and other professional qualifications. We are seeking someone who can demonstrate a successful track record of delivering on commercial/professional programmes and HRM pathways and to take the lead in establishing the delivery of professional qualifications in particular CIPD. You will have proven experience of successfully delivering to HNC/HND level business management and CIPD qualifications, hold a degree level in Management/HRM or equivalent and an assessors qualification. Ideally you will hold a teaching qualification or be willing to work towards.

Closing date: Friday 8 February 2013 (12:00 noon)

Interviews are scheduled to be **Thursday 21 February 2013**

To apply online and to download further information about these roles please logon to the college website www.lcwc.ac.uk/vacancies

www.lcwc.ac.uk



**Don't forget to
check out our
jobs board
online at:
www.feweek.co.uk**





Leeds City College

PRINCIPAL AND CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

SALARY: UP TO £135K FOR AN EXCEPTIONAL CANDIDATE (INCLUDING PRP)

This is a new post providing a unique leadership opportunity as Principal and Chief Operating Officer of Leeds City College, one of the largest and most successful colleges in the sector. The College has over 1,700 staff, 40,000 students and an annual group turnover of over £90 million.

As one of the most exciting and innovative colleges in the sector, Leeds City College is at the forefront of its local and regional agendas and is a significant national influencer. In order to succeed with its ambitious plans for the future, the College is seeking to appoint an exceptional individual with talent, energy and vision. The successful candidate will deliver outstanding service and ensure that innovative learning and teaching is at the heart of all of the College's activity.

The right candidate will also provide significant strategic leadership as part of the Leeds City College Group structure, reporting to the Group Chief Executive, Peter Roberts. If you would like to discuss this role with Peter on an informal basis, please contact Sara Porter on 0113 284 6236.

THE CLOSING DATE FOR THIS POST IS: 12NOON ON FRIDAY 1ST FEBRUARY 2013. INTERVIEWS WILL BE HELD ON 12TH AND 13TH FEBRUARY 2013.

College Leadership Services
Expertise in FE

We are working with College Leadership Services on this important appointment.
Please contact Helen Anderson for an application pack: handerson@collegeleadership.co.uk
or 0115 911 1117, or visit www.collegeleadership.co.uk/current_appointments.asp
for further information about this post.



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Chardelle Mason on 020 8123 4891**



New Year... Outstanding Opportunity!
Vice Principal, Curriculum: c.£85k

Wigan and Leigh College serves over 16,000 learners every year and has been judged by Ofsted as Outstanding in meeting their needs. With strong leadership and clear direction being a key feature of continued forthcoming success rates, the College is on the up.

In order to enhance these improvements, the College is seeking to appoint an individual with a focussed approach to leading curriculum change. Results driven, the ideal candidate will have a broad curriculum background and a leadership style that will encourage and empower others to deliver innovative learning to the highest quality standards.

If you feel you can meet this exacting specification then we want to hear from you.

Potential applicants are welcome to discuss the post in the first instance with the Principal, Cath Hurst on 01942 761801.



The Complete Guide To Funding Apprenticeships

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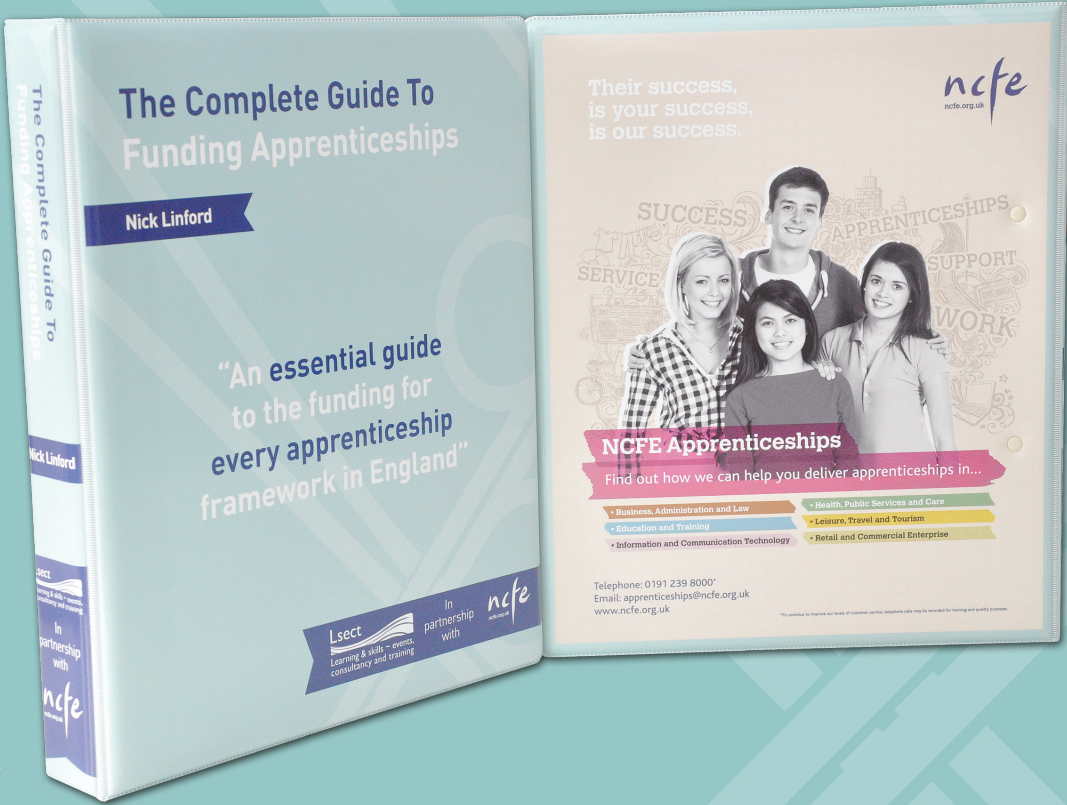
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ncfe.org.uk

"This complete guide to funding apprenticeships is an invaluable tool for any organisation that funds and delivers apprenticeships."

Mark Emerson, Head of Information, Systems and Planning at Chelmsford College

Order today from www.fundingguide.co.uk



Updated to include new functional skills rates

FE Week Sudoku challenge

	8		6	7		
6			1			5
			2	7		9
		8		7		4
		4			2	
7	1		4		9	
3				5	6	
9				4		3
		2		1		6

Difficulty:
EASY

How to play: Fill in all blank squares making sure that each row, column and 3 by 3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9

Solutions: Next week

		6		5	1		3
			2			9	
		4					8
8			9				4
		7		1		9	
4				3			1
7					5		
	5			2			
6		9	7		3		

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

Last Week's solutions

4	1	9	2	8	7	6	3	5
7	5	6	3	1	4	9	8	2
3	2	8	5	6	9	4	1	7
8	6	3	1	7	2	5	9	4
5	9	4	6	3	8	2	7	1
2	7	1	4	9	5	3	6	8
9	3	2	7	5	1	8	4	6
1	8	5	9	4	6	7	2	3
6	4	7	8	2	3	1	5	9

Difficulty:
EASY

2	5	3	9	7	4	1	6	8
4	8	7	3	6	1	9	5	2
1	6	9	2	8	5	4	3	7
6	9	2	1	3	8	5	7	4
5	1	4	6	9	7	8	2	3
7	3	8	4	5	2	6	1	9
9	7	6	5	4	3	2	8	1
3	4	1	8	2	6	7	9	5
8	2	5	7	1	9	3	4	6

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

FE Week mini-mascot

Follow the adventures of *FE Week's* biggest and smallest fan!



"Mostly this week I've been taking my brother, baby Tom, out for a ride in the snow"

You can also follow our *FE Week* mini-mascot on Twitter @daniellinford